

Lincolnshire officials to pursue grant funding for Milwaukee Avenue study without Buffalo Grove

 chicagotribune.com/suburbs/lincolnshire/news/ct-lsr-milwaukee-avenue-study-tl-0706-20170629-story.html

Ronnie Wachter

6/29/2017

Looking to move forward on a possible study that could help identify ways to maximize the economic potential of Milwaukee Avenue, officials in [Lincolnshire](#) recently learned they may have to try and secure funding on their own.

Village officials said earlier this spring that they wanted to reach out to [Buffalo Grove](#) about possibly working together to secure a grant from the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP), which would help conduct the comprehensive study of a two-mile stretch of Milwaukee Avenue. The commercial corridor primarily covers Lincolnshire but also includes portions of Buffalo Grove.

ADVERTISING

But during a board meeting June 26, Lincolnshire officials learned that neighboring officials in Buffalo Grove declined the invitation out of concern that it could threaten funding for their planning studies of commercial areas in Buffalo Grove.

Since there is a mixture of retail, office space and residences along Lincolnshire's stretch of Milwaukee Avenue, village officials still see a need to seek the grant from CMAP and conduct the comprehensive study, said Assistant Village Manager Adam Letendre.

"All these different uses, they've all come in on their own," Letendre said. "It's never been looked at comprehensively. The village is committed to it – one way or the other."

By securing the grant, Lincolnshire could avoid paying a majority of the costs to conduct the study. CMAP grants typically cover 80 percent of planning studies like the one being considered for Milwaukee Avenue, officials said.

With that in mind, local officials also want the expert advice from CMAP, which can guide Lincolnshire on how best to maximize and possibly change the zoning codes, current uses and future uses of the commercial corridor, Letendre said.

Any possible changes that would result from the study cannot be predicted until local officials hear from the experts, he said.

During the recent board meeting, village officials noted that CMAP typically awards grants for projects that have a wider scope, and they said they stand a greater chance of winning a CMAP grant if Buffalo Grove partnered with them on the potential study.

But officials in Buffalo Grove have been conducting their own study of Lake Cook Road since last year, said Chris Stilling, director of community development in Buffalo Grove.

Once the study of Lake Cook Road concludes, officials were planning to study possible updates to the village's comprehensive plan, which will include the stretch of Milwaukee Avenue that cuts through the village, in 2018, Stilling said.

Since the CMAP grants are "very competitive" to secure, Buffalo Grove officials were concerned the agency may turn down grant applications, if CMAP knew Buffalo Grove officials were planning to study Milwaukee Avenue next year, Stilling said.

"It's not looked upon favorably," Stilling said. "We needed to move forward."

But Lincolnshire officials are planning to move forward with their own study, Letendre said.

The stretch of Milwaukee Avenue features various uses, from the Sedgebrook retirement community to the newly opened NorthShore University HealthSystem's walk-in clinic at the former Barnes & Noble, as well as the longstanding Par-King miniature golf course.

"We've got pockets. We've got pieces that are doing very well," Letendre said. "We've also got vacancies that haven't done anything for 15 years."

RWachter@PioneerLocal.com

[Twitter @RonnieAtPioneer](#)